

AKIRA 2



THE COMPLETE WORKS OF KATSUHIRO OTOMO VOL. 2



KATSUHIRO OTOMO

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AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 2

PURSUIT

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

The year is 2000. The world is rebuilding from World War II. In *Nasu-Tokyo*, plans are being made to hold the next Olympics in the "old city"—where, thirty-eight years before the first of the bombs fell.

Kasoda and his friends—teenaged delinquents from the local vocational school—have made an unauthorized motorcycle run into the old city to check out the site and found far more than they expected. In an area said to be totally deserted, they encounter a strange, white-faced child known only as **Number 28**. He is terrified of something and is possessed of extraordinary telekinetic abilities. During the encounter, the paranormal boy grievously injures **Tetsuo**, one of **Kasoda's** close friends. Then he vanishes.

Kasoda's gang find themselves in trouble with the authorities following the incident, and learn, to their surprise, that the "police" they encountered after the accident were not normal officers, but part of some secret concern. Moreover, **Tetsuo**—who they believed had been taken to a hospital, has disappeared.

The next night, at **Hanabishi's**, a tough local dive, **Kasoda** bravely attempts to pick up **Key**, a strange girl who catches his fancy. **Key**, however, is not interested. In fact, she and her companion, **Ryu**, are part of an underground resistance organization, dedicated to learning what is happening in the old city and putting a stop to it.

During the mystery that ensues, both the delinquents and the resistance fighters again encounter **Number 28**, and again he uses his powers to catastrophic effect. Both groups are scattered, but first **Ryu** and then **Kasoda** re-encounter **Number 28**. **Ryu** attempts to rescue the paranormal boy, but **Kasoda** is anxious to punish him for injuring **Tetsuo**.

As they argue, the mysterious soldiers pursuing **Number 28** reach the scene, armed and ready.



Kasoda



Number 28



Key



Tetsuo



HEY!
HEY!



HEY!

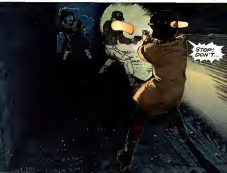


HEY!
HEY!
HEY!



HEY!
HEY!















OH!!



THIS WAY!
QUICKLY!



I THOUGHT
I SAW
SOME THING!

BRING
A LIGHT!

BEHOLD THE
SILVER-
RED!



THAT'S
THE
LIGHT!

THAT'S
THE
LIGHT!

THAT'S
THE
LIGHT!

THAT'S
THE
LIGHT!



THEY'RE
IN THE
SCORCHING
WALL!

COME
ON! THE
OTHER
GUY HAS
FOUND
THEM!



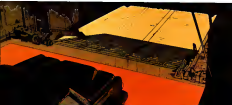


HALT

**NO VEHICLES
PERMITTED PAST
THIS POINT**

WARNING

BUDDABL DABUDDA





WE'VE RECEIVED
WORD HE'S PINNED
DOWN BY THE
CANAL IN THE
EIGHTH
DISTRICT, SIX



HOW IS
HE?
REACHED?



HIS
EYES
ARE
CLOSED.



THANK



WHAT ARE
YOU
DOING
FOR
HIM?

THANK

THANK

THANK





AA-OOOGA



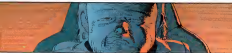




























YOU'RE
BEING
VERY
FOOLISH.



COLONEL...



I DON'T
KNOW
WHAT
IT IS.

FOR SOME
REASON,
THE
LITTLE
CREATURE
RESPONDED
TO ME.



AND THE
GUY I'M
HOLDING
HAD A
HAIR-
TRIGGER.

YOU
STILL
REFUSE
TO
UNDERSTAND
VERY
WELL...



MADE.



COLONEL
TAKASHI
IS IN A
VERY BAD
WAY.

PRECISELY.



DEED IS
OF THE
EARTH,
AND I AM
NOT LATE
NOW.



STEWART: HAVE THEY
CHIEF JUSTICE
THROUGH THE NEW
LEFT AND THE
RESISTANCE AND
MOVING?



**TRUST AND
YOU WON'T
REALLY
HUNT
YOUR**



100



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YAAAAH!



HA! HA!



KROOM

THEY
AREN'T
BURNING!

GET
THEM!

SANDY!

SANDY!



IS YOUR MOUTH
STILL CLOSED ABOUT
GETTING IT?



BRAND!

WHAM

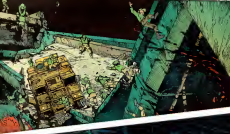


WHAM!!



WHAM
WHAM
WHAM

KRAK







BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA















ARE YOU TRYING
TO TELL ME
THERE IS NOTHING
WORTHY OF
GAMBLING??



OF COURSE NOT.
JUST WITH LONGS
I'M OUT TRY FACING
THIS WEEK

HEY, KANEDA,
GIVE ME
SOME!

I ALREADY
TOLD
YOU...



THE NEXT THING
YOU'RE GOING TO
BE OUT OF IS THIS
SCHOOL... AND ON
YOUR WAY TO
REFORM SCHOOL



IF THAT HAPPENS,
YOUR TEETH ARE
GOING AS OUT OF
YOUR MOUTH!

I SUPPOSE
IT'S MEDICINE.

YEAH, COUGH
MEDICINE



YEAH,
BUT...
BUT...

FORGET
YOUR MOUTH!

ZIP



How
good
your
Mouth is



SIT DOWN,
MR. KANEDA!

NEVER
MIND ME,
MR. JUST
GO ON
WITH
CLASS

















IT'S CONTROLLED
LARGER
REGISTRATION
SIXTY-SEVEN.

WHICH
MEANS
NO?



THE PUBLIC MIGHT
HAVE ACCESS TO IT.
THERE'S NO LEGAL
WAY A PRIVATE
CITIZEN CAN GET
THE DRUG.



WHAT ABOUT THE
GOVERNMENT?
COULD ONE OF
THEM BE INVOLVED
IN--



-- SOMETHING
ILLEGITIMATE!



UH, WHAT
ARE YOU
RESEARCHING
MAYOR?



I THINK
MAYBE...



IT'S A
POSSIBLE
NEGATIVE--
FOR A
POSITIVE.







BECAUSE IT
OCCURRED
THERE. WE
HAD HIM
BROUGHT
HERE.

SOMETHING
TURNED UP
IN THE
ELECTRO-
PHYSICAL
LAB.



WE CHECKED AND
DISCOVERED IT. THERE'S
A PATTERN TO HIS
IDEAS. WHEN I'M
NEVER ENCOUNTERED
BEFORE.



HOW
OLD
IS
HE?



COULD
YOU
TELL
ME
MORE?

WHAT ARE THE
CHANCES OF HIM
DEVELOPING?



THERE'S ALWAYS
A CHANCE. IN ONE
CASE, A SUBJECT
APPEARED WHEN
HE WAS
EIGHTEEN.



BY THE WAY,
ISN'T HE
OVERDUE?

IT'S
ALREADY
EIGHT
O'CLOCK.



IS HE BEING
TAILED?

NATURALLY!



THEN I SUGGEST
YOU CONTACT YOUR
WATCHMAN.

I'M DOING
THAT NOW.







NEXT ISSUE: NUMBER 411

KATSUHIRO OTOMO

The creator of *Adios* was born in April of 1954 in Japan's Miyagi Prefecture, an agricultural and fishing province some 400 kilometers northeast of Tokyo. He grew up there and attended Senriwa High School, which, for a rural school, seems particularly favored by the comic book muse. Another prominent comics artist, **Yoji Kameda**, is also a graduate, and some years earlier one of Japan's most famous comics creators, **Shohei Oshinomiya**, known world-wide for his *Cyborg 009*, *Kamen Rider*, and current best-seller *Japan Inc.*

In high school, Otomo became, in his own words, "crazy about the movies." American films of the period in particular seemed to be capturing the new spirit of youthful unrest and rebellion all over the world. Movies such as *Bonnie and Clyde*, *Easy Rider*, *Five Easy Pieces*, and *The Strawberry Statement* had particular impact upon him at the time and some of their sensibility can still be detected in *Adios* and other work.

Soon after graduating high school in 1973, Otomo moved to Tokyo. His goal was to become a comics artist. He achieved this in August of 1973 when his first published work, an adaptation of the *Frederic Mitterand* short novel *Maleo Falcone*, appeared in the weekly comics magazine *Action*.

Over the next few years Otomo created a number of short stories in comics form. These would range from twenty to thirty pages, about the length of a full comic in the U.S. But in

Japan it is not unusual for an on-going series story to run to a thousand pages or more. Customarily stories first appear in serialized segments of twenty to thirty pages in a weekly, bi-weekly or monthly comics magazine and then, if popular, are collected into books of around 200 pages. During the period Otomo's pieces were most regularly appearing in *Action* magazine. Later they were collected into book form beginning with *Short Piece* in 1979. This collection was followed by *Highway Star* (October 1979), *Good Weather* (March 1980), and *Boogie Woogie Waltz* (May 1982).

Having achieved a promising degree of success and attention with these short works, Otomo began to apply his skills to larger material. In 1979 publication began on *Fire Ball*, a story built around a human versus mega-computer theme. Though it appeared in a limited circulation magazine and is, to date, still uncompleted, *Fire Ball* marked the beginning of Otomo's interest in the science-fiction action genre and established his following among high school and college students deeply addicted to the visual culture. *Fire Ball* was the natural forerunner of Otomo's two most acclaimed works *Demon* and *Adios*.

Demon is a story centering upon the conflict between two residents of a modern day high rise apartment building. One is an old man, the other a little girl. Each possesses deadly psychic powers and their mounting dual has devastating consequences.

for all around them. **Domo** began serialization in January of 1988 and continued for almost two years. When completed it was revised by Domo and issued in book form in August of 1993. **Domo** was an instant best seller as well as a subject of some controversy. It created a stir when it won Japan's science-fiction (Grand) Prix of 1990 for best SF novel, the first time the prize had been awarded to a comic work.

The success of this 236 page graphic novel led Domo to undertake an even more ambitious project which, when completed, would number some 1000 pages. As a place to launch the new work, he chose **Young Magazine** published by **Kodansha Ltd.** The bi-weekly magazine had been struggling to win the same high school college student audience that **Domo** portrayed as the most aware and sensitive readership for the new directions he worked to achieve. The work week of course, **Akira** and with its tradition-breaking appearance the circulation of **Young Magazine** began to rise. Today it is over one million. Each collected volume of **Akira** released in book form broke new ground in terms of format and price as well as in enthusiastic reader reaction. Four have appeared to date. The fifth and final volume is planned for Spring of 1989. When completed the saga will have a total of three million copies in print.

Along with other comics work—such as **Sayonara Nippon** (Good bye Japan), a tragic-comic story of a Japanese band

experts failed attempt to become a hero in New York, **Kibou wa mo Sensei** (Feel like War) based upon an original script by **Toshihiko Totsugi** about a Japanese youth in China during World War II, and **Kousenshi-to-Saizenshi** (Heroes and Criminals), a collection of parodies on **Grimsby's Fairy Tales** and other classics—**Domo** has remained interested and involved in film.

In 1992, he took about six months off to make his own sixteen minute film, **Jyu-G Wazurai** (Give Me a Gun, Give Me Freedom). He produced it without any commercial backing, costing it with his own funds. When finished, it played at **Kochiya Hall**, a Tokyo theater for avant garde plays and films. **Domo** has also continued to work in animated film as well as television commercials for such clients as **Sanyo Canon** and **Honda**. Currently he has just completed the animated movie of **Akira** for which he acted as director, scenarist, designer and illustrator.

In Japan there is a great deal of speculation about just where the title name of **Akira** originates. American readers have several issues to go before the character actually makes an appearance. There are those who assume it is homage to one of Domo's favorite movie directors, **Akira Kurosawa**. Others have claimed it is the name of a drinking buddy of Domo's from years ago. But **Domo** himself never gives an answer. He just laughs. And the speculation, like interest in the series itself, continues to grow.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO

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A sixth volume from World War II through now events are shaping in Neo-Tokyo. A pursuit has begun. Its object is a newborn face child with incredible telekinetic powers and the mark Number 26 on his palm. His father dies in something poised and fused. Something or someone called AKIRA. Two pursuers are the mysterious girl Kiy and her companion, Ryu. Opposing them are troops of a secret government force. Swept along is the rebellious young motorcycle-gang leader Kaneda. Attached to Kiy and angry with Number 26 for the injury of a friend, Kaneda becomes part of the violent outlaw group gang which leads into the city's sewer system and a showdown with two new players. The Colonel and Masaru, Number 27.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S



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I love um

I buy um

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